

III. Remarks

Claims 19-22, 24-26, and 28-32 were pending in this application and were rejected. The present amendment amends claims 19, 22 and 26, and cancels claim 32. After this amendment, claims 19-22, 24-26, and 28-31 will be pending.

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendment and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention.

The Examiner stated that it was not clear to what "the additional steering torque" was referring. The term "the additional steering torque" has been provided with an antecedent basis defining it as the torque superimposed on the steering torque applied by the driver. The steering torque applied by the driver has been renamed to "driver steering torque". For further clarification, claim 19 has also been amended to state that the speed of turning the steering wheel is the speed at which the steering wheel is turned by the driver.

Claims 22 and 26 have been amended for clarification to refer to the "additional steering torque" in connection with the steering torque applied by the module.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Additionally, claims 19-22, 24-26, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for

being anticipated by Czekaj (U.S. Patent 5,742,141).

In rejecting claim 19, the Examiner stated that moving the wheel in a fast motion (that is normally associated with guiding a vehicle during parallel-parking maneuver) and transferring the vehicle from a bad trajectory to a good trajectory would effectively reduce torque required to rotate the steering wheel. Thus, the steering torque was negatively correlated to the speed at which the steering wheel is turned.

Applicants disagree. The farther the vehicle deviates from an intended trajectory, the faster the driver will turn the steering wheel to return to the intended trajectory. Therefore, in the method disclosed by Czekaj, the correlation between the steering wheel turning speed and the added steering torque is rather positive, not negative. Furthermore, for the argument's sake, even if there were a statistical negative correlation, the claim was written in terms of a function: The steering torque superimposed by the steering torque control module is a negative-slope function of the steering wheel speed. But because "correlation" is also a statistical term, the claim language has been amended to replace the term "correlation" with --causal dependence--. Such a causal dependence is supported by the specification in paragraph [0085].

Czekaj does not show a causal dependence of the steering torque superimposed by the steering torque control module on the steering wheel speed the vehicle in a parking space. Czekaj's added steering torque depends solely on the trajectory and is the same whether the driver turns the steering wheel fast or slowly. So if the driver using Czekaj's method turns the steering wheel fast in a way that will take the vehicle outside the trajectory, the additional steering torque is increased. The same occurs if the

driver turns the steering wheel in the same direction, but slowly. The additional steering torque applied by the Czekaj reference does therefore not depend on the speed at which the driver turns the steering wheel, only on the path that the vehicle is going to take according to the driver input.

As amended, claim 19 is believed to be patentable over the prior art. All other pending claims depend from claim 19 and are thus believed to be allowable as well.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Czekaj in view of Shyu et al. (U.S. Patent 4,931,930).

After claim 19 has been amended to be patentable, this rejection becomes moot because claims 28-31 all depend from allowable claim 19 and are thus allowable as well.

Conclusion

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that personal contact would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the Attorney of the Applicants at the earliest convenience of the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,



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